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ZNR UUUUU ZZH (CCY CAPTION ADDED - MSI2267 - AD6B0003 - 555)
R 080738Z DEC 05
FM AMEMBASSY RABAT
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 2231
INFO RUEHAS/AMEMBASSY ALGIERS 3592
RUEHMD/AMEMBASSY MADRID 5273
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS 3899
RUEHRO/AMEMBASSY ROME 1401
RUEHCL/AMCONSUL CASABLANCA 0941
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 0897
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS
RUEAORC/US CUSTOMS AND BORDER PROTECTION WASHINGTON DC
RUEABND/DEA WASHINGTON DC

UNCLAS RABAT 002456

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SENSITIVE

STATE FOR NEA/MAG, INL
PARIS FOR HOUSTON, HALEY
ROME PLEASE PASS TO DEA PASQUARELO

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y - CAPTION ADDED

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [SNAR](#) [MO](#)
SUBJECT: NARCOTICS: MOI DRUG CZAR HOPES FOR GREATER
COOPERATION WITH US

REF: RABAT 2406 AND PREVIOUS

¶1. (U) This message is sensitive but unclassified. Please protect accordingly.

¶2. (SBU) SUMMARY: In a December 6 meeting with visiting DEA officials and emboffs to discuss GOM counternarcotics efforts, senior Interior Ministry (MOI) official Khalid Zerouali, Governor-Director of International Cooperation, explained that for drugs to be completely eradicated in Morocco they must be attacked at three levels: production, trafficking, and consumption, but noted that the GOM "can not tackle these issues by ourselves." Describing his desire for increased cooperation between the U.S. and Morocco, Zerouali commented that DEA and GOM interactions should move beyond day-to-day operations to a more strategic level of cooperation. Zerouali closed the meeting remarking, "Let's make 2006 a year of concrete cooperation." END SUMMARY.

Morocco's Counternarcotics Focus

¶3. (SBU) On December 6, DEA Country Attach in Paris Sam Houston, DEA Special Agent Bronwyn Haley, A/RSO, A/LEGATT, and Poloff met with senior MOI official Khalid Zerouali, Governor-Director of International Cooperation, to discuss Moroccan counternarcotics issues. Zerouali explained that although there is still a lot of work to be done in order to eradicate hashish, "Morocco is proud to be trying." (NB: Zerouali's office, among other things, leads overall coordination of the Moroccan government's counternarcotics strategy). He noted that Morocco is strides ahead of other countries in that the GOM has developed a comprehensive counternarcotics strategy. He also explained that the GOM has actively and willingly engaged in joint activities with the United Nations. Zerouali pointed to Morocco's forthcoming cooperation with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime's (UNODC) 2004 study on cannabis production and eradication efforts in Morocco as an example of such

cooperation. According to Zerouali, Morocco's counternarcotics strategy is focused on protecting the population, and the MOI is always working towards solutions that will benefit Moroccans.

Zerouali Offers Warm Welcome

14. (SBU) Contrary to previous meetings with Emboffs (reftels), Zerouali did not use this meeting to express his dissatisfaction with what he deems a lack of U.S. efforts to provide Morocco with border security assistance. Instead, Zerouali warmly welcomed visiting DEA delegation, focused his comments on counternarcotics issues, and wished the delegation a safe return back to Paris.

Need to Work on Three Levels

15. (SBU) Zerouali explained that for Morocco to eradicate drugs it must operate on three levels: production, trafficking, and consumption. He, however, highlighted that the GOM "cannot tackle these issues by ourselves," saying that Morocco must rely on the help of others to solve its drug problem.

16. (SBU) On production, Zerouali claimed that Morocco has "done a lot of work" to eradicate hashish and to enhance local development. Commenting on a phenomenon he feels is hard to overcome, Zerouali indicated that difficulties often arise with crop substitute techniques because of the financial incentive to produce drugs in place of legal crops. He took this opportunity to remind Houston of a successful trip he took to Taounate province in July with former DEA Country Attach in Paris Habib to view Morocco's eradication strategy first-hand. Zerouali mentioned that Morocco has declared Larache "a province without cannabis."

17. (SBU) Turning to trafficking, Zerouali stated that this is an area where the GOM needs help. In a not-so-veiled reference to the potential for increased cooperation with the U.S., Zerouali said that "we count on you" to help combat trafficking. Zerouali disclosed that Morocco seized 318 tons of hashish last year.

18. (SBU) Zerouali conveyed that Europe needs to step up to the plate and assume its responsibility with respect to consumption-related issues. In his view, European countries need to be more seriously engaged in the fight against drugs, but that this battle will be difficult so long as a demand from Europe continues to exist. Describing what he perceives as mixed signals from Europe, Zerouali said it is hard to combat drugs when some European countries are trying to pass legislation to legalize drugs while others in Europe are trying stop the spread of drugs.

Looking For Enhanced Cooperation

19. (SBU) Describing his desire for enhanced cooperation between DEA and the GOM, Zerouali commented that relations can move from day-to-day cooperation to a more strategic relationship between the two entities. After explaining that there is a need to organize more exchange visits to foster opportunities to share ideas, Zerouali stressed that the relationship needs to move beyond rhetoric, and that more concrete steps need to be taken.

110. (SBU) Zerouali also mentioned that the MOI is in the process of launching a drug-related website. He complimented the DEA website, and proudly pointed out that the MOI website was "copied" from the DEA model. Zerouali closed the meeting by saying, "let's make 2006 a year of concrete cooperation."

111. (SBU) DEA officers discussed the possible visit to

Morocco of DEA Administrator in early 2006. Zerouali said the GOM looked forward to the visit.

¶12. (U) DEA cleared this message.
Riley